



# News Release

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## **New shellfish safety map shows risks in real-time**

**OLYMPIA** — A new online shellfish safety map gives shellfish harvesters an up-to-date look at biotoxins, pollution, and bacteria levels at public beaches or on their private property. Beach names, nearby landmarks, and specific addresses are searchable to help provide real-time information on shellfish safety risks.

The new [shellfish safety map](#) was developed to provide current information about areas where water quality conditions and public health risks are evaluated by the Department of Health.

Shellfish filter water and may retain harmful bacteria, viruses, and toxins that can cause nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea when eaten. Some can even be life threatening. The health risk for eating raw shellfish increases during the summer.

People can lower their risk of getting sick by following the three C's of Shellfish Safety: check, chill, and cook.

Check the [shellfish safety map](#) to see if any warnings or closures are in effect, and look for warning signs posted at the beach. It's also important to check the [Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) website to verify that harvesting is allowed.

Chill shellfish as soon as they're harvested, and keep them cold until they're cooked.

Cook shellfish to an internal temperature of 145 F. Thoroughly cooking shellfish kills vibrio bacteria. Cooking doesn't destroy biotoxins, so checking for restrictions is the best defense.

The Recreational Shellfish Program evaluates pollution conditions around public-access shellfish areas and restricts harvest areas when necessary. More [information on shellfish safety](#) is on the agency website.

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